

A RESOLUTION to create a special joint committee to study the feasibility of establishing a system to encourage law enforcement agencies to seek international accreditation.

WHEREAS, law enforcement accreditation has proven to be of great benefit to the administration and personnel of law enforcement agencies, neighboring criminal justice agencies, state, county, and local governments and the citizens of this great state who rely on law enforcement agencies to preserve the public safety and peace; and

WHEREAS, from the standpoint of the administration and command staff of law enforcement agencies, accreditation requires an in-depth review of every aspect of the agency's organization, management, operations, and administration, including the establishment of agency goals and objectives, the re-evaluation of how agency resources are being utilized; and the re-evaluation of agency policies and procedures; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement accreditation also provides the agency with an opportunity to correct deficiencies before they become public problems; and

WHEREAS, the standards of law enforcement accreditation provide neutral guidelines for developing strong budget justifications and provide norms against which agency performance can be measured; and

WHEREAS, accreditation also provides law enforcement agencies with a continuing flow of information relative to exemplary policies and procedures and provides recognition that the agency's managerial and operational policies and procedures are in accord with national standards; and

WHEREAS from the viewpoint of the peace officers and other personnel employed by law enforcement agencies, accreditation assures that agency policies and procedures are in written format and available to all personnel and assures agency personnel that all aspects of the personnel process meet national standards and are fair and equitable; and

WHEREAS, accreditation also enhances the morale of law enforcement agency personnel by building confidence in the effectiveness and efficiency of their department; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement accreditation promotes relationships with other criminal justice agencies and requires the establishment of mutual aid agreements; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement accreditation promotes standardization of operational policies which, in turn, increases efficiency in handling calls for assistance, referrals and joint investigations, and also requires participation in statewide radio, fingerprint, criminal information and crime reporting systems; and

WHEREAS, from the standpoint of state, county, municipal, and other local governments, accreditation provides objective measures in justifying decisions relative to budget requests and personnel policies and provides assurance that the governmental unit's law enforcement agency is delivering a high level of service to its citizens; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement accreditation also reduces the likelihood of vicarious liability law suits being successfully pursued against the agency and reduces the costs of liability insurance for the agency; and

WHEREAS, from the viewpoint of the citizens who are served by a law enforcement agency, accreditation demonstrates the commitment of the agency to professionalism and enhances community understanding of the agency's role, as well as its goals and objectives; and

WHEREAS, law enforcement accreditation also assures members of the community that their law enforcement agency is committed to providing the highest quality service and commits the agency to a broad range of programs that directly benefit the public; and

WHEREAS, because of the numerous benefits of law enforcement accreditation enumerated in this resolution, it is imperative that this General Assembly examine the need for and the feasibility of establishing a statewide system of accreditation for the various law enforcement agencies in Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That there is hereby created a special joint committee to study the feasibility of establishing a statewide system of accreditation for law enforcement agencies in Tennessee.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special joint committee shall be composed of three (3) members of the House of Representatives and three (3) members of the Senate, to be appointed by the respective Speakers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all appropriate agencies of state government shall provide assistance to the special joint committee, upon request of the chair.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special joint committee shall be convened by the member with the most years of continuous service in the General Assembly. At its first meeting, the special joint committee shall elect a chair, vice-chair and such other officers that the committee deems necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all legislative members of the special joint committee who are duly elected members of the 99th General Assembly shall remain members of such committee until the committee reports its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly and shall be paid as members of the General Assembly are paid for attending legislative meetings as provided in Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 3-1-106.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the special joint committee shall timely report its findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Ninety-Ninth General Assembly no later than February 1, 1996, at which time the committee shall cease to exist.

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